Years Old. And *Fig.* 3. was brought away from the Child Ten Years Old; both theſe without any *Section.*

IV. *An Account of the* Tubera Terræ, *or Truffles found at* Ruſhton *in* Northamptonſhire; *with ſome Remarks thereon. By* Tancred Robinſon, *M. D.* and *R. S. S.*

SIR,

THE *Tubera Terræ* (which you was pleas'd to ſend me, together with a Draught of them drawn with your own Pencil) obſerv'd lately at *Ruſhton* in *Northamptonſhire*, by that curious and learned Gentleman Mr. *Hatton*, are indeed the true French *Truffles*, the Italian *Tartuffi* or *Tartuffole*, and the Spaniſh *Turmas de Tiera*, which are not noted by Mr *Ray* to be found in our Britiſh Soyl. I have ſeen them thrice as large at *Florence*, *Rome* and *Naples*, where they eat them as a delicious and luxurious piece of Dainty, either fry'd in ſlices with Butter or Oil, Salt and Pepper; or elſe out of Pickle, and often boyl'd in their Soup. Of theſe there are three or four Species mentioned by *Matthiolus*, *Imperati*, *J. Bauhine* and *Mentzelius*.

Theſe obſerv'd in *England* are all included in a ſtudded Bark or Coat, the Tubercules reſembling the *Capſules* or
V. *Fig.* 4. Seed-Veſſels of ſome *Mallows* and *Alcea's*; the inward ſubſtance is of the conſiſtence of the fleſhy part in a young Cheſnut, of a paſte Colour, of a rank or hircine Odour, and unſavoury, ſtreaked with many white Veins
V. *Fig.* 5. or Threds, as in ſome Animals Teſticles; the whole is of a globoſe Figure, though unequal and chinky.

What

What theſe *Trubs* are, neither the Ancients nor Moderns have clearly informed us; ſome will have them *Calloſities*, or *Warts* bred in the Earth: Others call them ſubterraneous *Muſhrooms*. If you could ever find *Veſtigia* or Marks of a Stalk, or of Fibres, or Capillaments about their outſides, I ſhould be then almoſt tempted to gueſs, that they are the Product of ſome Bulboſe or Tuberoſe Plant, perhaps a *Satyrion* or *Orchis*, or ſome other Root of that numerous Tribe, many of which have a Seminal Smell.

I conjecture that theſe *Tubera Terræ* were found after the late Thunder and Rains; for ſome of the Ancients call'd them *Ceraunia*, to which *Juvenal* ſeems to allude, *Sat.* V.

Poſt hunc raduntur Tubera, ſi ver
Tunc erit, & facient optata tonitrua cœnas
Majores: tibi habe frumentum, Alledius inquit
O Libye: disjunge boves, dum tubera mittas.

They are moſt tender in the Spring; though after Showers and ſultry Weather they may be plentifully found in the Autumn: the Wet ſwells them, and Lightning may diſpoſe them to ſend forth their particular Scent ſo alluring to the Swine.

Ludovicus Romanus, *Navigat. Lib.* I. *cap.* 7. affirms, That Thirty Camels Load of theſe *Truffles* or *Trubs* brought from *Armenia* and *Aſia Minor* have been all ſold at *Damaſcus* in two or three days. The manner of finding and rooting them up may be read in Mr. *Ray*'s Itinerary of *Italy*, p. 403, 404. and in his *Catal. Stirpium Exot.* at the end of his Travels, *p.* 109.

I need not tell you the Uſes to which the *Greeks* and *Romans* apply'd theſe Vegetable Bodies, nor how they are dreſs'd and eaten at this day. *Pliny*, *Martial*, *Plutarch*, *Athenæus*, *Galen*, *Apicius*, &c. may be conſulted

for the firſt; *Nonnus*, *Bruyerinus*, *Ciccarellus*, &c. for the laſt.

POSTSCRIPT.

AFter the writing of the foregoing Letter, I received Intelligence, that Mr. *Hatton* obſerv'd Fibres iſſuing out of ſome of theſe *Tubera*, which lay Spit deep under ground; ſo that perhaps they may be *Plantæ ſui generis*, and their ſulcated *Papillæ* analogous to, if not Seed-Veſſels. You know ſeveral Vegetables bear their Seed near the Root, as the *Trifolium ſubterraneum tricoccum reticulatum floſculis longis albis*; moſt of the *Arachydna's*, and ſome other *Legumes*, which flower above, but ſeed under ground. As to the *Truffles* lying ſo deep, that is common to many Roots that ſhoot up Stalks above the Earth. To inſtance only in that *Lathyrus tuberoſus*, call'd commonly *Chamæbalanus* and *Terræ Glandes*; in Engliſh, *Peaſe-Earthnut*, digg'd up and eaten by the poor People, *Non niſi altâ foſſione inveniendæ*, ſays *John Bauhine*. But for a clear Hiſtory of theſe, our Judicious Mr. *Ray* may be conſulted, *Hiſtor. Plant. Vol.* 1. p. 895, 899, 918, 919, 942.

V. Fig. 4.

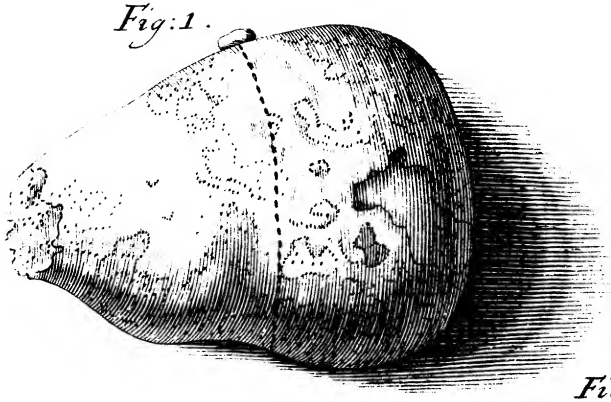
The Roots of our *Bulbocaſtanum* (of the Umbelliferous Tribe) commonly call'd *Kepper-Nuts*, *Pignuts* and *Gernuts* in the North, lie very deep, and fatten Hogs, which are very greedy of them. I have often obſerv'd the Shepherds and Boys in *Yorkſhire* digging them up for a delicate Diſh: Perhaps this is the *Nucula Terreſtris Septentrionalium* of *Lobel*, and the *Apios* of *Turner*.

Fleetſtreet, Aug. 29. 1693.

Yours, &c.

Tancred Robinſon.

Fig: 1.



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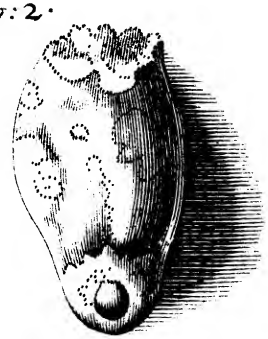

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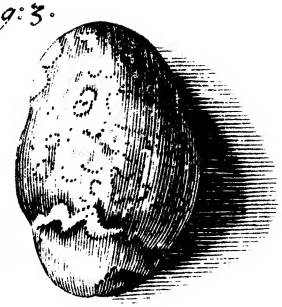


Fig: 1.

Fig: 6.

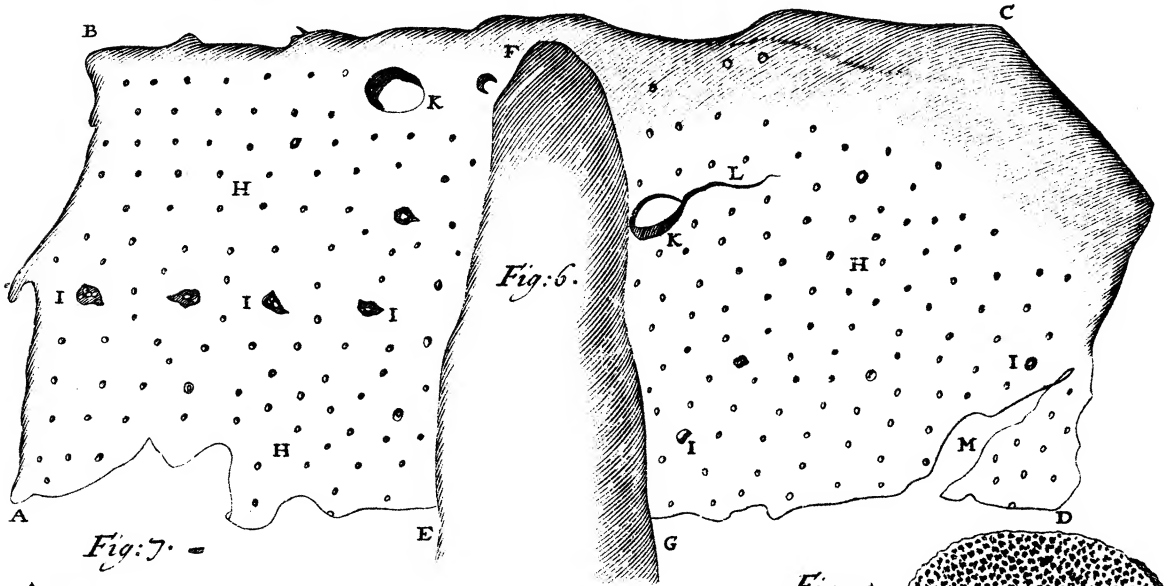
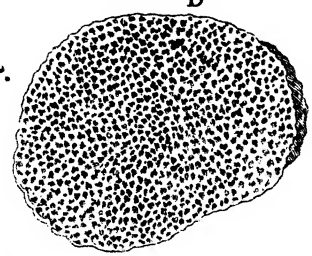


Fig: 7.

Fig: 5.



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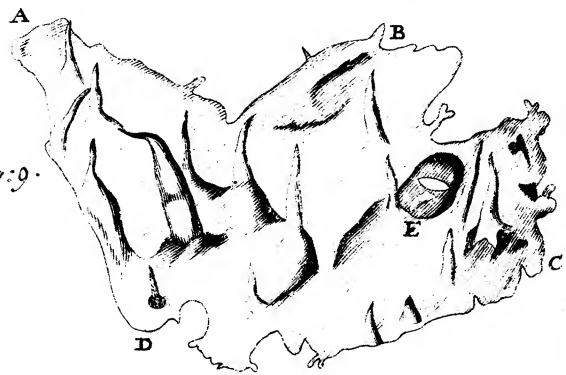

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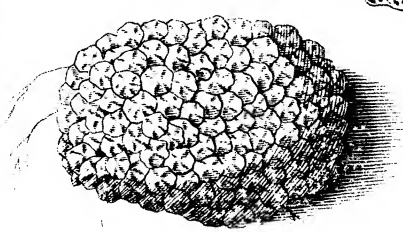

Fig: 8.